



Florida House of Representatives

Charles McBurney

Representative, District 16

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HOUSE APPROVES CIVICS EDUCATION BILL

TALLAHASSEE – Legislation requiring Florida public school students to take a civics education course in middle school was approved by the Florida House today. Representative Charles McBurney (R-Jacksonville) amended House Bill (HB) 7087 to create the Justice Sandra Day O'Connor Civic Education Act, named in honor of the first female justice of the United States Supreme Court who spoke April 7, 2009, to a joint session of the Florida Legislature and advocated for a greater emphasis on civics education for students.

"As Justice Sandra Day O'Connor said to our chamber – when our youth can name the judges on American Idol but not the three branches of government, we need to do a better job with civics education," said Representative McBurney. "This bill will help prepare Florida students to be active, engaged citizens and help them think critically both inside and outside of the classroom."

"It is imperative that our children be educated about our government. Recent polls have shown that forty percent of citizens in Florida cannot name the three branches of government," stated Representative Charles McBurney in introducing this legislation.

This Legislation provides that all Florida middle school students successfully complete a one-semester civics education course beginning in the 2011-12 school year. The civics education course must include the roles and responsibilities of federal, state and local governments; the structures and functions of the legislative, executive and judicial branches of government; and the meaning and significance of historic documents, such as the Articles of Confederation, Declaration of Independence and the Constitution of the United States. This legislation will require an end-of-course evaluation in civics education. A student must earn a passing score on this assessment by the 2012-13 school year.

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